

EPSU calls on the European Parliament to investigate the tragic effects of COVID-19 on the care sector



(1 July 2020) Today EPSU together with the European Disability Forum and the Age Platform Europe will formally call on the European Parliament to launch an investigation to assess the failures of authorities in addressing and managing the crisis in the long-term care sector during COVID-19.

The care sector, its workers and its users have been hit extremely hard by COVID-19. Many previously existing problems such as understaffing or a lack of preparedness have been exacerbated by the pandemic. In many cases care workers on the frontline of crisis response felt that their calls for better protection were ignored and, despite their best efforts, they were often not able to protect those persons they care for. As a consequence, half of the deaths related to COVID-19 in Europe have so far occurred in residential care and support services.

We must be clear: this tragedy could have been prevented if failed policies and underfunding had been addressed. It also constitutes a breach of human rights, first and foremost the rights to life, dignity and health. It is paramount to understand the failures, omissions and delays that led to this tragedy in order to prevent a repetition in the future. The European Parliament as the representative of citizens across Europe needs to use all its power and take any action needed to shed light on these breaches of human dignity.

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